

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 659

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION expressing support for the restoration of the East Tennessee State University football program.

WHEREAS, East Tennessee State University (ETSU) possesses a long and storied football tradition which began in 1920 when the school, then known as the "East Tennessee State Normal School," fielded its first football team, clad in navy and old gold, colors chosen in 1911; and

WHEREAS, in 1935, during Coach Gene McMurray's tenure, the team changed its name to the Buccaneers, the name under which the team won the Smokey Mountain Conference Championship in 1938; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, the school gained university status, and the East Tennessee State University Buccaneers entered a new and exciting era; and

WHEREAS, the 1969 ETSU football team, coached by John Robert Bell, had a record of 10-0-1, won the Ohio Valley Conference Championship, and defeated Louisiana Tech, led by Terry Bradshaw, in the Grantland Rice Bowl in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 ETSU team, under the astute leadership of Coach Mike Cavan, completed the season with a record of ten wins and three losses and gained its first invitation to the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division I-AA tournament, at which the Bucs defeated Villanova in the first round; and

WHEREAS, the Buccaneers team of 1987 garnered the organization's first victory over a Division I-A team when it defeated North Carolina State University by the score of 29-14, and the 2001 team gained prominence with its 19-16 victory over the top-ranked Georgia Southern University team; and

WHEREAS, ETSU discontinued its football program in 2003, and the last Buccaneers football game was played at home on November 22, 2003; the program ended on a high note with that day's victory over the team from the Citadel; and

WHEREAS, with the cancellation of its football program, ETSU lost its membership in the Southern Conference; this result left a void in campus life, as the remaining ETSU athletic teams and their fans lost the opportunities to play the school's traditional rivals on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, there are many individuals who wish to see the return of the ETSU football program and marching band, looking forward to the day on which a new collegiate football tradition will begin, to the renewal of old rivalries, to the rebuilding of the school spirit, to the construction of a new stadium, and to the boosting of the development of the spirit of competition, the desire for academic excellence, and the development of leadership qualities; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby extend our full and wholehearted support for the restoration of the football program at East Tennessee State University and eagerly anticipate the return of the fine Buccaneer tradition to Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.